

**GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM**

Friday, November 25, 2005

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Just a few months ago, when so many across the South were experiencing tremendous hardship, Michigan citizens were among the first to open their wallets, their homes and their hearts to the victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Thousands of Michiganders called a relief hotline to offer dollars for the relief effort, toys for children, clothes for the stranded and shelter for the displaced. There was an outpouring of support here that will always make me so proud of Michigan.

And on this Thanksgiving, that's what I am most thankful for – the citizens of this state and their tremendous compassion.

I'm thankful for our state employees and their generous donations to this year's Michigan Harvest Gathering, which collects food for the needy.

I'm thankful for our tremendous philanthropic community. Michigan's foundations are currently ranked eighth in the country in total grants to community groups, nonprofits and other gifts.

I'm thankful for those who are serving our country overseas and for their families who are sacrificing. Don't forget to say a prayer for them this holiday season.

And I'm thankful for all those around the state who demonstrate the spirit of service not just in the wake of disasters like Katrina, but every single day.

Studies show that in recent years, 29 percent of Americans donated their time to community volunteering. But in Michigan, that number is 46 percent. What an outstanding statement of commitment to service.

Now, if your family is like mine, I know that as soon as you polish off that turkey dinner, talk around the table with your kids will probably turn to holiday shopping. But this year, I hope that Michigan families will not only give great gifts to loved ones, but the great gift of their time to those in need across our state.

As you sit down to do some of that holiday shopping online, think about surfing to this site as well: [www.1800volunteer.org](http://www.1800volunteer.org). This is a terrific resource where you can learn about a variety of volunteer opportunities with reputable organizations in your community – from food banks to shelters to mentoring programs.

And you can also call this toll-free number: 1-800-VOLUNTEER. That's 1-800-865-8683.

Imagine how one hour a week of your time will brighten the day of a senior citizen, or feed someone in need of a meal or, through mentoring, forever change the life of a child. These are all lasting gifts of service and I encourage you to get involved.

This Thanksgiving, we in Michigan have a tremendous amount to be grateful for. And as Governor, I'm grateful for the generosity and compassion that the citizens of our great state show every single day.

Thank you for listening and have a safe and happy and blessed Thanksgiving holiday.